Story Book

Using this Booklet

This book offers an optional way to play, that focuses more on the behind-the-scenes story. If you're interested in experiencing the game in greater depth, give one player the story book and refer to it when certain triggers occur in the game.

When a trigger occurs, locate it in the book, and read the entry out loud to the players. You will help set the tone for the experience and add flavor to the scenarios. We hope you enjoy these entries that give extra depth to the game. Most of the content provided in this booklet is meant to be used with the Valley of the Dead King Core game, but you'll also find some content that appears in the Valley of the Dead King Expansion.

Expansion Triggers

Triggers that have the Expansion icon will only occur when you're playing with the "Return to the Valley of the Dead King" Expansion material.

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When the thistle whistles it is time to run. For the bringer of death, his work has begun. Pricking, stinging, and taking all life.

The dark tormentor, this causer of strife. All those who stand shall be cast aside. No longer drawing breath and neither alive.

Yet when he calls they are sure to rise. To take up arms and fight by his side. So listen closely and heed what I say. Sharpen your wits, and don't dare disobey.

The one of whom I speak, the one of whom I sing, is the vilest of vile ones, the evil Dead King.

Beginning the Game

Here are four different ways to begin your adventure in the Valley.

Choose one to begin your game, and read the entry aloud when you're ready to begin.

Good luck adventurers!

Normal Play

A fell wind blows, a harbinger of the evil that is to come. Word has spread throughout the land of an unspeakable evil. The Dead King has returned, and this time he will not stop until the valley has fallen under his maniacal grasp. You are heroes, born from different lands, but still united as citizens of the valley. Together, as a light snow falls under a bright moon, you forge an alliance of friendship and bravery, with one common purpose: to set out and destroy the Dead King and his minions. Before you lies a difficult journey, for as the army of the dead advances, your quest shall become ever more perilous. When the sun rises tomorrow and a new day begins, you'll band together and set out to save this realm from the wrath of the Dead King.

Choose one of the 6 Cities. This is your home and the City you begin the game on. Once per Game Turn, when you turn in Quests here, each hero gains 1 free Gear Upgrade of their choice.

Alternate Start 1

The bell that called you to last night's city gathering brought dire news. Hushed messengers claimed that a vile necromancer was on the move, confirming what you feared most. The Dead King has returned. When volunteers were called for, many fled to their homes, and some left the valley altogether. You have stayed. This is your home. It is where you grew up, made your friends, and with some luck, where you will be buried in peace. No one will take your home from you. With a booming voice, you answer the call and raise your hand in defiance to the necromancer. Tomorrow, as the light of morning breaks across the city, you'll turn and gaze upon its streets one more time, then pass through the gate and hope good fortune lies ahead. Tonight though, you'll need to collect your gear and say your good byes.

Randomly draw a HEXtile that contains a Shrine and place it anywhere on the game board. You are disciples from this Shrine and begin the game here. You may turn in any number of Quests here, and you begin the game with this Shrine's Blessing.

Alternate Start 2

It is a late hour when you are summoned from your study. The leader of your order has called a meeting of the brethren. Heeding the call, you rise and make your way to the main chamber of the shrine. Your friends and companions, acolytes of the order, are discussing dark tales. Their grave, troubled looks, leave you concerned and unsure. As the last member is ushered inside, the monk speaks, his voice very serious. "I have received news that I fear is true. An army of the dead approaches our borders, led by a dark necromancer, a nobleman who once called the valley his home. Look and see, for he comes!" The elder dips a single finger inside a silver bowl and the water begins to glow. You all watch, and a look of horror spreads through the crowd. You see the crowned lord of evil, the Dead King. "I ask but one thing," the elder says, "that some of you find the strength to leave these sacred halls and challenge this foe. Know that it will not be an easy task, but you shall leave with the blessing of our ancestors." A few murmurs can be heard about the room. Without hesitation you step forward and bow, accepting the urgent quest. Interestingly enough, you aren't the only one.

Randomly draw a HEXtile that contains a Ruin, a place recently destroyed by the Dead King. Before the game begins, resolve the Ruin Event as if the heroes had rolled a hex. This pre-game Event does not consume the Ruin. Each hero begins the game with 3 Food, 3 Gold, and no other supplies. Winning this game is worth 1 Valor.

Alternate Start 3

While you sleep, a vision clouds your mind. A dark entity has attempted to rouse you to its service, an attempt that has left you chilled to the bone. Your city, your home, has come to ruin. Your memory is foggy and you have trouble remembering how you came to this place. You walk the street for some time before your memory returns. This was your city, a home to hundreds, before the Dead King came for it. Are you the only one who remains? The Dead King is on the move, and he has taken your people. Grit and resolve are your weapons now. You remember your family and friends. Anger wells up inside of you. Your wail of frustration would wake the dead if they were here. You have one goal now: to stop the necromancer from destroying anyone else. You are tired and hungry, barely able to go on, yet you gather what you can from your old home and step out into the dawn. You will have your revenge for your fallen friends.

Game Locations

City Triggers

Read these entries aloud when your group enters each of the six Cities for the first time.

Fain'hil

Fain'hil, the City of Silver, shelters the few elves who call the Runecrest Valley their home. Governed by the Council of the Wind, it stands guard over the trails that lead to their ancestral forest. News of the King's return has caused its residents no shortage of unrest. Nearly everywhere you go within the city, whispers of his conquest can be heard. Some have left, but many believe they must stay and fight for their home, regardless of the looming threat. Fain'hil is still a beautiful city, decorated in silver of master craftsmanship. Walking its streets, you marvel at its wonder.

Dragon's Port

Welcome to Dragon's Port, the "armpit" of the valley. After being questioned about your intentions, you are grudgingly welcomed inside. The city is not a place where you would walk around alone at night. The man in charge is Baron Lasswell. His great mansion rises above the rundown houses and businesses in town. Trade goods flow into and out of the city, many arriving from a far away land. One thing is quite apparent, you are sure that Lasswell always takes his cut.

Rokk'to Encampment

Shortly after arriving in Rokk'to, you are met by Dregnak, the Orkish Shaman. While walking past the tents and huts, you notice the nomadic tribe preparing for war. Despite their fierce nature, you feel oddly safe as you approach the Shaman's war hut. You are greeted and immediately plunged into conversation about the return of the Dead King. Here you learn how the Dead King's magic has affected the land itself. The forests are withering; the rivers are drying. The orks have chosen to watch over the earth and guard it till the last. As long as you respect their traditions, you are welcome to come back and rest whenever you want.

Stormwrath Moot-home

Nestled far into the Gylm mountain range sits Stormwrath Moot-home, the gathering of trolls. As you approach, it is strange to see so many of the big folk staring at you, and you feel a bit out of place. You approach a nearby merchant to see what they have to trade. He refuses to talk, instead pointing to a large building at the end of town. Heeding his silent advice, you approach the building, hoping to speak with their leader, Kembeorn Thunderfist. Before you know it, the trolls surround you, lining up in a ring. Thunderfist points to you and then steps forward menacingly. No doubt, he wants you to fight him, to show your worth. Must your battles begin so soon? The thought makes you queasy.

Hagh-Grindish

High upon the mountain and hewn into the stone rests the dwarven city of Hagh-Grindish. The Iron Citadel is ruled over by two brothers, Thurdin and Durdin Onyxhelm. They are also the unofficial rulers of the Runecrest Valley; under their guidance, its hard-working citizens thrive. Their skilled animal trainers are second to no one, and their horses and rams are extremely valuable. News of the Dead King falls on deaf ears, as the dwarves are stubborn and refuse to believe such nonsense. Walking through the streets of stone you often hear, "I'll believe it when I see it." For this city's sake, you hope they won't have to ever believe. Their stubborn nature is somewhat difficult to adjust to. Still, they seem to genuinely care for the denizens of the valley.

Restwind Dale

Walking into the peaceful city of Restwind Dale feels just like walking back into your childhood home. The halfling folk here are inviting and don't really care much for news of the outside world. You are shocked to find that most have not heard of the Dead King. The humble magistrate Aremi does her best to make you feel welcome and introduces you to the quiet life of her people. Excellent food, ale, and fantastic stories abound at the local taverns, allowing you to forget the troubles of the outside world, if only for a brief moment. You pray that this place may remain untouched by the decay outside, that their quaint town will never know the might of the Bone Legion. The thought propels you forward, you can't stay long. There is work to be done.

Shrine Triggers

Read these entries aloud when your group enters a Shrine for the first time, gains a Blessing, or a Shrine falls to the Dead King.

Entering

A feeling of awe and wonder takes hold as you pass through the immense, finely crafted oak door. Carved runic symbols adorn the archway and walls, and a quiet monk leads you deeper into the shrine. At its center, many monks gather around a large stone table, studying tomes of knowledge long past. Yet as you draw near, one of the robed figures notices you and stands. With open arms, he says, "Welcome to our humble shrine. Please, stay with us and rest a while. We may not have much, but what we do have, we are more than pleased to share. Take comfort, and ease your thoughts. I promise you are safe here."

Gaining a Blessing

As morning breaks, the monk who had acted as your host enters your room and asks for you to follow her. She leads you to a huge stone room. At its center stands the statue of one of the four Paragons. You gaze upon it in wonder. The monk says, "Lay your hands upon the statue's feet and state your intentions." The stone is oddly warm and soothing to the touch, and as you express your intent, a breeze begins to blow through the room, its origin a mystery. The monk smiles and speaks once more. "You have found your blessing. Well done."

A Shrine Falls to the Dead King

As the sun falls from the sky and night approaches, a darkness stirs beyond the gate. The glowing runic symbols, meant to keep evil at bay, crack and then shatter, breaking the protection surrounding this sacred place. Monks scream and scatter as a darkness flows through the entrance, heading for the innermost chambers. Then he appears in the courtyard, a tall thin figure cloaked in black and crowned in silver. He stands motionless as a hundred dead figures shamble past him, heading toward the main chamber.

Ruin Triggers

Read these entries aloud when your group enters a Ruin for the first time, experiences a Mythic Event for the first time, or the Dead King arrives at a Ruin for the first time.

Entering

Rumor has it that there are many treasure-filled ruins scattered throughout the Runecrest Valley, and your excitement rises when you stumble into one. Still, tales of trapped corridors and failed expeditions linger in your mind. As you take your first steps into the dark corridor, the musty air causes your nose to wrinkle. Your fingers feel the moss, and a sense of adventure takes hold. What dangers or wondrous items might be found within? You're uncertain, but you're brave enough to find out.

Mythic Event

The ancient runes carved into the stone archway were difficult to read in the flickering torchlight. They warned of danger, but your desire for adventure threw caution to the wind. You've spent all day attempting to crack the mysterious puzzlelock, and somehow, you activate it. Gears and clicks whir and lock the chevrons into place. A door bangs open, and a current of air sucks you into the chamber, dizzy and nauseous. Before you lies a gate formed from pure light. It guards an opening that breathes pure energy. You thrust your fingers through the gate. They vibrate, soothing you, and your dizziness and nausea pass. You reach in, up to your elbow, and something snaps! The chevrons spin and the gate explodes, tossing you away. You've survived something... incredible.

The Dead King Arrives in a Ruin

A shallow pool sits in the middle of the damp room. Rings of cobblestone are marked with runes indistinguishable to you. A small number of ancient coins lie scattered in the bottom of the shallow pool, you believe this to be a wishing well. Curious, you toss a gold piece in. A few moments pass and you smirk as nothing apparent happens. Just as you begin to give up your search in this desolate place, you feel a pressure rise in the air, and notice ripples forming along the perimeter of the pool. Your torch extinguishes abruptly, and as your eyes readjust to the little ambient light left, you realize you're no longer alone. A wheeze alerts you to his commanding figure, and your heart skips a beat. The Dead King has found you!

Black Market Triggers

Read these entries aloud when your group enters Bezzelquark's Black Market for the first time, the Black Market wanders, or when the last City falls.

Entering

You stumble out into the wilderness, exhausted from your recent battle. Your body aches, but your pride takes over and you begin to smile. You've made it another day. Just as you begin to pack up, something peculiar catches your eye. A series of carts and a wandering mass of humanoids appear on the horizon. You make the long walk to them, and you meet their leader, a short gnome by the looks of it. He greets you, "Welcome heroes! I'm Bezzelquark and this is our humble caravan. You seem a bit worse for wear. Please come and explore. I am certain you will find some trinkets you may desire." With that he urges you forward and leads you toward tents that seem to spring up like magic. You've heard rumors of this place: it's the Black Market!

Black Market Wanders

With lightning speed the tents and small squat buildings seem to collapse in on themselves. The larger tents pop like a firework, their pieces springing to life to reassemble into convenient portable backpacks. In the lead sits Bezzelquark, riding atop a strange machination that belches smoke from two large pipes. He bows to his followers and snaps one finger forward, setting the entire caravan in motion. Dust rises into the air, leaving nothing but a cloud in its place. As quickly as it had come, the Black Market has moved on to its next destination.

When all Cities Fall

Your heart sinks at the evil news. The valley has fallen, all major cities now belong to him. A spark of hope ignites as you recall one particular conversation with Bezzelquark. He had been laughing with glee, his face red with excitement. He said: "I enjoy creating and crafting oddities. But this..." he giggled, "this is outstanding!" He had pulled back the flaps of the tent to lead you to the center of the Black Market. With a twirl of his mustache he explained: "I call it the 'Orb of Unsightliness.' It allows me to select who can see and hear this wonderful place." Dancing away, he had let out a boyish chuckle. "Don't worry, I won't be letting the Dead King find this place any time soon."

Items

City Items

Read these entries aloud when your group purchases a Gear Upgrade, Reliable Mounts, or the Fortification plans for the first time.

Gear Upgrades

Merchants of all races (and sizes!) cry out from the streets, attempting to gain your attention. Each one of them claims to carry the best wares and provisions and offers to beat the price of their neighbor. Being a hero has its benefits as you are able to pick and choose what gear you want, and with some searching, can find it at a reasonable price. So as the day ends and your bartering is complete, you are able to rest, well equipped for the days ahead.

Reliable Mounts

"Traversing the enormity of the valley can be quite a challenge!" the dwarf merchant cries out to the crowd. "Only the wisest of adventurers know to journey with a mount bred in Hagh-Grindish!" You've heard stories of dwarven stubbornness, and that trait ensures their trained creatures are trusty and reliable. After the crowd disperses, he makes you an incredible offer. "You can each leave this place with a mount for a nominal price. A better deal you won't find anywhere. I'm willing to do this, because we need you out there!" He points to the horizon, and to the valley below, and thanks you for your efforts. After a brief examination you're amazed. These rams and horses are well worth the cost.

Fortification Plans

After spending most of the day paying different merchants a hefty amount of coin, you have finally made the preparations required to build your own fortress. This is not a task you can complete on your own, for you've made more than simple plans, you've brought good people together, people who believe you can make a difference in the valley. Your renown is growing, and the word is spreading in the streets. A crier nearby shouts: "Hear one, hear all! Our heroes who stand against the necromancer are here before you! For you, dear citizens, they selflessly fight, expecting little in return! Yet now they need our aid! A mighty fortress must be erected, so that they might better serve us all! Protect your families, come now, give all that you can and help in the fight!" You walk behind him, and many of the onlookers begin to follow you.

Black Market Items

Read these entries aloud when your group acquires one of these items from Bezzelquark's Black Market.

Troll's Blood

A shifty halfling stands at the edge of a darkened alley and beckons you to follow him. You look about, uncertain of the man's intention when he says,, "Quickly. Quickly!" Succumbing to curiosity, you follow him. The short stranger leads you halfway past a row of tents and opens his jacket, bringing forth a vial filled with a thick red liquid. He laughs. "Do not be afraid, for I offer you a mighty healing poultice. This is troll's blood, drink it and feel a new life flow through you!" He senses your trepidation, and adds "What? Gross? You don't actually think this is blood, do you? Of course it isn't. Well, not *all* of it. Okay, so troll blood *is* a key ingredient, but look... when you need to heal, you need to heal, right?" He doesn't seem all that bad, but you still find yourself wondering if this is a good idea.

Bone Bowl

You are filled with uncertainty as you step inside the shaman's tent. The glass jars that line precarious shelves are filled with components that threaten to turn your stomach, not to mention their smell. An Ursimar, all fur and leather, emerges from the back, a bowl crafted from bone in its huge paw. "The power of this artifact is greater than any you can imagine," he says. His dialect is unfamiliar, and you're not quite sure if he's asking for more than just gold. When you hesitate, he says, "Are you prepared to better understand your enemy?" With some hesitation, you decide to pay the shaman and take the bowl.

Uktar's Withered Tongue

"You've seen nothing like this," the little gnome begins. "Uktar had always been an adventurous type, brash to a fault. One evening to preserve rations, he figured he'd slice up their kill and take a little taste. The snake's hide was unnaturally tough, but there was succulent umber-hued meat inside. His party had never consumed a stone serpent. For good reason! Mere moments into his first bite, Uktar felt a tingling in his mouth. His gasp was quickly squelched as his tongue turned to stone. He looked to his friends with dismay- a group that could only shake their heads in disbelief at yet another of his blunders..." he stops speaking rather abruptly, and a big stupid grin appears on his face, apparently awaiting your response. When there isn't one, he concludes: "Oh yes, you were asking what it does?"

Bezzelquark's Enhancifier

Bezzelquark smiles. "I see you have a keen eye for the greatest of items. As nearly everything within my city is for sale, this item is no exception. I am more than happy to part with it for a price." You have heard of Bezzelquark's Enhancifier and wonder if the stories about it are true. "I will need a sum of gold from each of you, and my favorite creation can be yours." Uncertain if the device even works, curiosity overwhelms you. "Can you show me how it works?" he smiles smugly, nods, then asks for a gold piece. He takes it, holds it in front of you, then inserts it into the machine. You watch, amazed, as the gold coin moves through the contraption, doubling itself. The gnome grins and says, "It's time for me to make a better one anyway."

The Staff of Dragons

It was expensive, but as you grip the scaled shaft of the Stave of Dragons, you feel no regrets. The elegant item is wonderfully crafted. Still, you doubt that this staff actually has the power to control dragons. The merchant had said so, but it might have clearly been nonsense. Gnomes generally over embellish. And the keyword he spoke, what nonsense it was: "Servus Drago Verata Nicto." As you hold the staff and speak those silly words, you feel uneasy. When the connection sparks between you and the item, you begin to rethink your luck. Maybe there is something to this! You hear a chilling roar in the distance. Within moments a winged form appears on the horizon, heading towards you. For a moment you prepare for battle, but stop in amazement as the beast lands next to you. It is huge. It is a young dragon, but it is huge!

Spelunking Supplies

The small gnome looks up at you with delight. "This here is a proper set of spelunking supplies. You'll find spidersilk rope from the Greenfire Forest, several troll moot glowstones, glowing chalk, exquisitely crafted dwarven helms, and so much more. Look at all this stuff!" He motions to a rucksack that is full to the brim. "Trust me. You'll be able to travel Undervalley with ease!" He nonchalantly mutters the hefty price and reaches for a small journal: "Accalon has mapped many of the caves that exist in Undervalley, you'll find them all listed in here. I only ask that you return the journal to me when your quest has come to its resolution." You've always wondered about the rumors that a great series of tunnels and caves exist in Runecrest Valley. Now you can explore them. After you pay the little gnome, he looks uneasy: "Be sure to understand, traveling Undervalley is a bit more dangerous than one might think. Use your wits and be sure to bring enough provisions with you. I wish you the best, adventurers!"

Circumstances

Discoveries

Read these entries aloud when your group gains one of the following Circumstances: the Cave System, the Frozen Portal, or the Ancient Fortress.

Cave System

The entrance is massive and looming, standing as tall as any barracks, but the sun cannot penetrate its depths. Tavern-spun stories of hidden treasure and wondrous fortune cloud your mind and beg you to enter. Yet the extent of any dark cave is unknowable. Your curiosity may best even you. Still, the Dead King is on the move, and cities are now falling. Uncertainty hangs in the air as you struggle to decide whether this tempting cave is worth the risk.

The Frozen Portal

What lies before you is a strange device. It's not that you haven't seen ice before, but this is far from a natural formation. The thick hexagonal archway resonates a powerful presence that is both dark and chilling. Your torch dims as you approach it, but the meager amount of light remaining manages to pierce the darkness within, revealing a stupendous treasure trove. Greed overcomes you, drawing you to those sparkling jewels. In the bitter cold, a mist curls up from the chamber floor. There's more here than gold and jewels.

Ancient Fortress

As you make your way up the wild steppes, you spot an ancient, isolated fortress. Rising skyward, it is an exhilarating yet foreboding sight. It's apparently abandoned, something you might turn into a valuable base for yourself. You've heard tales of adventurers attempting to claim such places for their own use. But as you approach, the sound of something vile can be heard from deep within it, challenging you to enter. If you still want it, you'll have to clear it out first.

Events

Read these entries aloud when your group gains one of the following Circumstances: Mold, Treasure Chamber, or the Traveling Merchant.

Mold

If only it had been a monster, you could have avoided it. You'd rather face a storm, an annoying commoner, anything but this. Your food has begun to mold and rot. The scent turns your stomach, its stench burns your nose and throat. None of it can be salvaged. You take a swig from your waterskin to clear the taste. Uggh! You spit it out, it has grown foul. Frustrated, disappointed, you throw all your provisions away. Perhaps there's game or fresh water nearby.

Treasure Chamber

You're lucky that you were surveying so carefully as you walked. You've found an underground dwarven treasure trove. Scraping away the weeds, you pry at the slab, forcing it open on its creaky hinges. The door conceals a stairway, and you hurry down into a rectangular room. Your torch reveals dwarven carvings in the floor, warnings against looting. You may have found a royal chamber, or the secret stash of a prominent trading house.

Friendly Merchant

You are far from town when you encounter a lone rider. "E'llo travelers, m'name is Adalynn." Her smiling face is a welcome sight and you share your evening meal, trading news of the valley and the plight of the spreading darkness. "Now what do you lack, my friends? Name it, and I'll sell it to you!" Surely she jests. What does she carry, alone on her pony with her small duffel? Yet she insists: "What would you like? I have all that you might need. Try me. What is it t'yer after?" Angrily, you state your long list of needs. She gives you her price, and you scoff. "There's no way you can fit that all in your bag!"

Treasures

Read these entries aloud when your group obtains Xizane's Onyx Hourglass, Trailblazing Boots, or the Dungeoneering Manual for the first time.

Xizane's Onyx Hourglass

People have always been fascinated by the concept of time. One mage in particular sought to harness its force and use it for the betterment of all. Through countless years of research, the mage-turned-hero Xizane was able to harness time in the Onyx Hourglass in a way never before known. Realizing the power he could control and the evil that could be wrought on the world with it, he destroyed all of his notes, leaving just the Hourglass behind.

Whispers spoke of a mage capable of bending time to cleanse the world of evil. Stories were passed down through the generations, depicting the mage's castle as a place of mysterious wonder, though always hidden from the naked eye. Enchantments concealed the castle from all who sought it, powered by the destruction of evil that Xizane himself ensured.

The Hourglass drew to it the fiercest of evils the land had ever seen. Xizane sacrificed himself to protect the land and all of its inhabitants, attempting to ensure the hourglass never fell into the wrong hands. A millennium has passed since the mage's demise. Whispers of a castle appearing for brief periods and slipping away into the mists like a mirage are a child's tale. Have we actually found the fabled onyx hourglass?!

Trailblazing Boots

You spot a distant tail of smoke. Company for the night! But you arrive to find catastrophe. A company of explorers must have been surrounded by the Bone Legion here. The stench of death ripe in the air, yet no bodies remain. Well, if they had anything of value, they don't need it now. You search the camp and find a crate holding many pairs of boots marked with dwarven sigils of speed. Thanking the lost, you pull them on and find that you can move much faster.

Dungeoneering Manual

The abandoned hut promised nothing but a safe place to rest for the night, so your surprise at finding a dusty tome of such obscure knowledge is warranted. Browsing through the pages, you discover varied secrets and obscure tricks that will ease your journeys. However, the script is strange and takes time to read. The book will be useful, if you make the time to study it.

Encounters

Kobolds

1 **Type:** Monstrous Humanoid

While resting in an abandoned village, the sound of unseen scurrying feet catches your attention, and not a moment too soon. You rise and arm yourself as a group of kobolds leap from behind their hiding places. Small and menacing, they brandish jagged knives and chatter incessantly. For a moment, you stare at them, wondering who will strike first. Your thought is cut short as they leap forward, conducting a disorganized mess of an assault. Gosh, there's so many!

Giant Boar

3 **Type:** Creature

The wind blows, bringing with it a scent most foul. Before you can react, a creature lunges from the tall brush. Two massive spiked tusks nearly gore your torso as you dodge out of the way. While kicking up a cloud of dirt, the boar turns and prepares its next charge. There is only a moment's reprieve as you prepare to fight. It is apparent that others have encountered this beast before, due to the multitude of arrows embedded deep within its hide. You swear to succeed where others have failed, and then wonder with longing about tomorrow's breakfast.

Cyclops

2 **Type:** Monstrous Humanoid

The ground shakes as a large one-eyed monster appears from behind a boulder in a nearby field. It holds part of a tree in one meaty hand and plucks up a boulder with the other. It stares at you and slobbers, "Mmmm, fressshhh meeeeeal..." Before you can prepare, the cyclops barrels toward you, raising its massive club high. Not wishing to find yourself bashed or flattened by this thing, you rush forward, a little unsure of your future.

Plague Beast

4 **Type:** Undead

A swarm of flies fills the air. Swatting them away is futile, as their number is unending. You fear you are about to hear the voice of the Dead King himself, but instead, a sickly prolonged cry fills the air. The flies condense above a sickly site. Before you is a beast with dead sagging skin and disease-spewing open sores. It cries out again and the flies return to it, taking shelter within its hide. You try to contain your last meal, watching the beast slide toward you, its maggot-filled legs dragging on the ground.

Giant Eagle

5 **Type:** Creature

You spot it near the horizon, a majestic eagle. It is a welcome sight after a long day's travel. You enjoy its glorious flight, watching it begins to glide in your direction. As the winged creature approaches, you realize that it is not like any bird you have seen before, no, it is much too large. Suddenly it swoops overhead and its size stuns you to the core. You draw your weapon and prepare as the creature circles back, talons open and its eyes keen for its next meal.

Marauders

5 **Type:** Humanoid

You're in open land when marauders appear. They come at you from all sides, brandishing spears and shields. When you're surrounded, their leader says, "Gold and supplies, lads! These fine people will give us their gear." He turns to you. "You don't want to die, do you? Surrender!" You draw weapons and take your fighting stance. In a fury, he yells, "Bring me their heads!"

5

Young Dragon

Type: Magical Nature

The air churns, and a rapidly moving shadow catches your attention. You gaze upward in disbelief at the young dragon circling overhead. The beast opens its maw and unleashes a furious roar, evoking your own deep, primal fear. Your heart pounds and for a moment you consider fleeing, yet you stand fast and wait for its next pass. Though rare, you believe you're seeing a young member of their kind. Hopefully it hunts alone, for one you can handle, or so you keep telling yourself.

5

Cave Troll

Type: Monstrous Humanoid

At sunset, you take refuge inside a nearby cave. A night's rest free from the elements is an awfully welcome thought. However, as the bed rolls are laid out and the rations passed around, a rumbling moan comes from deeper within. A massive creature emerges from the darkness. You've stumbled into the path of a cave troll; a particularly large one! With a horrid growl, the monster lumbers toward you, likely after an easy meal.

Apparition

5 **Type:** Spirit

Something about this chamber seems off putting, as if something unseen is here, watching you. The air chills rapidly, and you can see your breath. A host of whispers begins to fill the air and suddenly a ghostly dwarf lord appears before you. Whoever he was in life no longer matters. This is an angry and fearsome ghost. The spirit wails, blaming you for something that you know nothing about, and rushes forward.

The Bone Legion

5 **Type:** Undead

At first you thought it was the howling wind, but quickly realize there is no breeze. Ascending a nearby hill, you look out across the valley, seeing the Dead King's terrible army for the first time. His vast and gruesome legion is tireless and eternal. Fists clenched, you observe the terrible might laid out before you. If only you could fight and defeat them here and strike a blow against the Dead King. You choose to avoid combat this time, but no luck! A small scouting party of the legion has snuck up on you. You must kill them all, lest they alert the whole army.

Short Stories

The Runecrest Valley was once vibrant and full of life. And even as the Dead King attacks, much more happens here than can be captured in the richest game. The Valley's residents are varied in nature, comprising of dozens of species. Here are some of their stories.

The King's Lieutenants

With a grim expression, the Ogre took note of the gash spreading in his side. It had already overtaken much of his torso and was now moving closer to his heart. Most would have fallen from such a wound.

He exhaled sharply into the cold air. His breath curled and churned as it escaped his massive lungs. The moon's silver light had disappeared, causing the grove to feel darker, even sinister. It had been a hard hit; the large figure knelt awkwardly in the snow, still reeling from the dark magic.

The massive Ogre rotated his head, his body trembling with rage. All around were signs of the skirmish. His mind was foggy and he struggled to maintain consciousness. He let the cold envelope him, then, its sting helping him focus. In an instant the pain melted away, and he found that he was cradling his battle-mate Karanna in his other arm. They had all been hit; was he the last of his party left standing?

He knelt in the snow for another long moment, steadying himself with his arm, palm braced upon the cold ground. Reverently, he placed the sorceress down. Standing, he searched for his comrades. He was the last one standing! Fury fueled him, and despite the growing wound in his chest, he turned to face the last of the King's Lieutenants. The undead knight was himself disabled, nearly beaten by the group. But nearly wasn't enough, the city of Restwind Dale was not yet safe.

The Ogre sneered and drew in his breath in rapid and powerful huffs, pulling in the air as if it were itself fueling his rage. Though the disintegration was spreading at a furious rate, he took a step toward his wounded adversary. Another dark bolt lashed out at him from the creature's broken hand, but he did nothing to avoid it.

Instead he drove into the undead warrior like a charging ox. He bellowed into the cold night, a sound that had the power to frighten even the dead. There was still work to be done, darkness to be driven out. And nothing, not even death, would stop him.

The Living Storm

Clouds churned far below her, rolling like waves against her sanctuary, the ruined mountain top. The air was thin at this elevation, though she showed no sign of discomfort and barely drew a breath.

She stood tense, waiting for something. Every so often a vague shape resembling a wailing face appeared in the clouds. They were slow to form and swift to fade.

Most would dismiss the occurrence as an oddity, but this demonborn knew better. Her adversary was a living storm, a primordial elemental force common to the Outlands, but quite rare at these heights. This was a powerful one, its churning influence extending everywhere for miles.

Content with her appraisal, she turned her attention to the ruin. The structures were tribal in nature, belonging to a civilization that must have disappeared long before. It was a calm place, and the spirits here preferred it that way. "Nearly perfect", she thought. She planted her staves on both sides, bending them to form an "X" above her head.

Her movements were beast-like. The beads and animal skulls of her necklaces and bracelets clicked and clacked as she worked. Vibrant red tattoos stood out on her dark skin, matching the red feathers in her hair. As she worked, fiery symbols appeared in the air around her. They hovered there, ethereal and mist-like.

The storm began its assault. She roared as she hurled herself into the battering wind, dancing around her staves in a ritual to awaken her trusted spirits. Recklessly, they answered.

Vengeance

A long and distant rumble reverberated through the sky. Seemingly endless rain had made the foothills more treacherous than usual. Nearby

streams had swelled, drowning the familiar trails. Vadrabrandt had been exploring the remote area, searching for the brigands who had betrayed the town. Today's light was now waning and the sky was once again bringing its war to the earth.

"Good" he thought, "the rain will mask our passage." The creature stood for a moment, near a cleft in the rock. He was clearly not of this world. He was what men called a shade, a half being made partially of shadow itself. His form, although physical, resembled dark bones covered in a thick layer of shadow, an ever-shifting mist that would struggle to appear human as he moved. He looked behind at his slow companions, and for a moment he wasn't sure if they would make the arduous trip.

Some time later when darkness fully took hold, he found what he had been searching for: a familiar carving on an old petrified stump. Vadrabrandt knew its significance. It was the mark of the Bandit Prince, a merciless thug who orchestrated a larger group of cutthroats willing to do anything for gold. This time "anything" had been to torch the town. There were many casualties; none of them were Vadrabrandt's friends, but that wasn't the point. He was here for vengeance for the innocent, plain and simple.

The ruins were close by, he could see their sentry in a short lean-to. It was evident that the brigand was sleeping. He would not be sounding any alarms this night. Vadrabrandt stepped into the clearing, no longer needing cover.

Then he boldly yelled into the camp: "Graylin." The sound was sharp and meant to cut like a knife, "...pain is temporary!" These were the same words the brigand used in their last encounter. He simply waited while the camp came alive with activity. Sloppy arrows began to zip past him. He moved effortlessly, avoiding them.

Vadrabrandt's dark legion came to join him, one by one. They were sluggish and rigid. They were animated corpses, but there were many of them. "Pain is temporary" he yelled again, and then growled under his breath to no one in particular: "This may hurt."

Bezzelquark

A narrow line of gold light peeked through the gap. It was dark in this room, but the door to the gnome's workshop was slightly ajar. The furnace was loaded to capacity this evening, for the air was heavy with smoke. A multitude of sounds spilled from within just as the light did, a constant presence fluctuating only in its intensity and tone. The sound of metal being pounded in place was followed by a staccato series of chinks and finally ended in a slow putter of miniature gears as they began to spin... Bezzelquark was hard at work, and had been for hours.

Another sound occurred then, something like a strange giggle mixed with a hiccup. It was abruptly answered by a thunderous boom. The vibration rocked the door frame and sent a large volume of smoke through, forcing it open as if it needed to escape the little man's madness.

His guardsman had been on watch all night in the adjacent sitting room. He peered through the open door, relieved to see that his charge was unharmed. "Mr. Bezzelquark, everything all right? You said you wanted to move out this morning, you going to be ready? Need anything?"

"Yes, yes!" the small old man chirped with glee. His face and clothing were now blackened from the smoke. "Just one moment more... I'm on to something!"

Bezzelquark held a polished gold coin up to his magnifying goggle, and his one eye widened in awe. Meanwhile, his guardsman waited, vexed at the delay. Very slowly and without taking his eyes off the coin, the old gnome lifted it up into the contraption he'd been working on. His mouth twisted, making him look both eager and perplexed. The guard thought he had seen this sort of thing before. Cautiously, he backed away.

Bezzelquark jerked a handle, and his machine made a horrid, scratchy, grinding sound. Its small case shivered and bobbled, and spat out not one, but two identical coins. The little gnome turned to his guard, smiling so much that the tips of his mustache touched his ears. "Hazram! Bezzelquark's is open for business!"

Crossroads

Those born with the rarest of gifts may find them a blessing or a curse. Roen learned to use his gift. He learned the hard way that he could be exploited. This young shifter was orphaned at the age of six and saved from the gutter by Baron Lasswell's shady lieutenants. Roen could instantaneously change form, a superb quality for a spy, and the Baron took full advantage of Roen's talent.

Dragon's Port is the city you go to get mugged, or if you're lucky, you'll only attract unwanted attention. What better place to train and corrupt a young mind? While spying for the Baron, Roen learned as much as seasoned thugs and wicked traders could teach, from their idle, overheard, conversations. The criminal's tales of ill-dealing and thievery inspired the boy. By the age of sixteen, he knew there was easy gold out there. He could snatch it easily, it seemed, and then change form to avoid capture. Roen rarely heard of the thieves who were caught in the act and died, nor of the thugs rotting in jail for their crimes. Eavesdropping, he learned what was lucrative, not how dangerous their trade was.

One evening, spying on a pair of thugs, with the moon providing just enough light for criminal activity, Roen watched from a rooftop, following his targets below. "Load the goods, quickly. We'll take the wagon straight to the Prince." The big guy was barking orders. Interesting, Roen thought. Lasswell will not be happy to know such dealings are happening here without his approval.

The thugs scanned the alley one last time, oblivious to the shifter lurking above them. They loaded their gold and valuables into their bags. They were not looking up. If they did, they might spot the fox with its reflective, yellow eyes, but they would not think to fear it. From his perch on the tavern's roof, Roen saw and heard all. That's how he knew that these men reported to the Bandit Prince.

Roen thought he was alone. Not thinking to look up, he was unaware of the raven flapping its wings, until it opened its beak and cawed, its eyes on the fox. Before hitting the tiles, its eyes glowed a brilliant blue. And then it shifted into a fox with slightly darker fur, settling right next to the stunned Roen. After a second of staring at the youngling, it shifted again, assuming the form of a man with a heavy coat and a bag over one shoulder.

"Are you going to introduce yourself, or are you going to keep acting like a common criminal?"

The fox's eyes glowed blue and in a moment its body shifted into a young man with a feathered hat on his head. "My name is Roen, and I am not a criminal... and be quiet!"

The man stepped back, motioning Roen to follow him where they were unlikely to be heard. "If you're not a criminal, why are you hiding in the shadows? Are you following these low lives?" With one bony finger, the man pointed to the group of bandits hastily loading their wagon.

"The Baron has honored me with an important role. I help him keep the peace at Dragon's Port. I'll be spymaster one day."

The grown shifter snorted with humorless laughter, "Shifters are not meant to hole up in one little place their whole lives. We can explore and travel, see the world." The corners of his eyes wrinkled with humor, "Haven't you ever wondered what it's like on that mountain over there?"

Roen followed his eyes to the mountains in the distant southwest, a familiar and yet enigmatic landmark. "Maybe."

The older shifter lowered the bag from his shoulder, opened it and produced a rolled-up parchment that did not capture Roen's interest. Inside the bag, he spotted some interesting gadgets, and that's what he wanted to see.

"It's up to you kid: what you want to do with your life. Lasswell is no better than those morons there, and the Bandit Prince is even worse." He pointed with his chin toward the thugs. "See you around, Roen." He shouldered his bag again, eyes glowing brilliantly, and shifted back into a raven, flying off into the night.

The man had left his parchment behind. It was a map. Roen opened it and was amazed. In one corner was a tiny city, Dragon's Port. The far corner of the map showed the southwest, with its tall and jagged mountains. A clear road connected the two, passing through rivers, plains, and forests. One spot nestled in the mountains and marked with a black "x" was labeled "old ruins, possibly treasure."

Roen turned back into a fox. He crept forward to watch the Bandits as they moved down the alley, getting farther away. In a few minutes he would lose sight of them and wouldn't be able to tell the Baron where they were going. He watched them depart, then peered back at the "x" on the map. He looked at the distant mountains with a new sense of thrill. Those mountains...in the far distance.

Roen's eyes blazed blue, then he shifted into a raven as dark as the night sky.

Discovery

Blinding rays reflect off the fresh fallen snow, turning the crystallized water into a million sparkling dots. Umber glances outside his window at the sight. The mountain is beautiful this time of year.

The small village rests on the east side of Skycrown peak, its position on the mountain shielding it from most of the brutal wind. Not far from his quaint home, the dwarves are starting their day, rising with the sun to tend to their duties. Some are preparing to head off to the mine and others to their various workstations. Umber watches them for a few moments, wondering about their routines, glad for his own.

Everyone has a craft and everyone must master it. That is the philosophy of this small clan, and they have held on to their ancestral beliefs throughout the centuries.

Five winters ago today, Umber came to this clan in search of enlightenment, but he found only struggle. Many say the stonemar are not meant for science, to Umber however, it was his life's work, no matter the difficulty. Some would say that dwarves are the most stubborn of all races, but any who met a stonemar would claim they are even more so. Their resolve is as rock solid as the mineral in their skin, and it fuels their will to succeed.

Umber punches the wall in frustration and glares at his table of vials, ewers and cruets. How hard can it be to craft this elixir? All he has to do is combine the right ingredients with the precise amount for each, at the exact temperature required. How hard can it be?

The answer is, at least five winters. Alchemy is incredibly dangerous. Accidents are more common than successes, some resulting in a burned building, scorched texts, or overflowing acids that scar everything. Evidence of each of these failures is apparent all over his home, and so it is a good thing he has no eyebrows to burn.

A knock on his door startles him from his frustrated thoughts. He opens he door to find Ashea, his neighbor. She holds out a basket full of crystal. Stonemar prefer crystal for their diet, but the kind she brings him today is a rarity indeed. She examines his work area, perceptive enough to spot the new hole in the wall. She smiles what one might consider a motherly smile of encouragement and says, "Maybe today then. Keep it up Umber, I know you're getting close."

She places the basket on the only spot of the house not occupied by test tubes and alchemical components. Which would be of course, the entry. She gives him a nod and hurries off to her work.

Umber sighs, scolding himself for not thanking her, and retrieves the basket. Settling onto his dirt floor, he crosses his legs and takes one of the smaller crystals out. He places it between his teeth and bites it in two. Half of it shatters with a high-pitched "Ting!" He spits the other half onto his palm, stares at it, and then his eyes open wide.

Putting the basket aside, he grabs his scale and weighs the rare crystal. It is a bit too heavy. Biting off another small piece, he reweighs it, noting the change on a nearby scroll. It takes three more attempts to find the perfect weight. Dropping it into a large container, he adds a silvery reflective liquid to it, a blood-red fluid, and a bit of black, sticky sludge. He stirs the mixture over the fire with a large metal spoon. The solution becomes smooth as glass and then bubbles, as the crystal reacts with the liquid.

Using his pincers, he removes the container from the fire and gingerly sets it down. He watches it wide-eyed, knowing that it might easily explode. While it cools, he cleans his work area, never taking his eyes off the cooling elixir. Hours later, he dips a finger in; it is cold enough. He takes a deep breath and swallows a whole spoonful.

The effect is immediate, and he gleefully watches as the small cut on his arm from yesterday's experiments heals immediately. A wave of rejuvenation ripples through his body. This brew is even stronger than what they're selling in the cities!

Yes, he thinks proudly, the answer is five winters.

The Siren's Call

The rough sea churned and rolled, causing the Galleass to lurch wildly in the bay. Its Boatswain held his position at the fore of the ship and steadied his focus on the smaller vessel. He could barely see the faint gold glow from one of its occupants.

The sirens were calling, their delicate croon tugging the air, enticing the sailors to leap overboard. "T'would be a death worth dying..." he caught himself thinking; the implications sending shivers down his spine. Just then a massive wave crushed the deck, dwarfing the topmast. A tense moment passed before the ship could right herself and when it did he found himself wondering if the foolhardy heroes could actually defeat the Siren Queen.

The sirens circled the two figures who were now treading water, their small boat smashed to pieces. It was the young woman who shined. Her skin emitted a soft gold light which reflected off the water as if there were shards of crystal dancing upon its surface. She was illumon: a half-spirit, composed primarily of light. Her companion was nearby, brandishing a harpoon. They looked hopeless, facing the Siren Queen in open water. The Queen crested the waves ten yards from them, her monstrous presence an imposing thing.

She swam closer and purred a single command: "Oriul my love... kill her for me...?" Her resplendent voice commanded for his attention. The half-elf strained against her control and locked eyes with his companion, bewilderment awash on his features. He whispered "Amrien.... I'm sorry."

Amrien's eyes lit with power. She lifted herself out of the water, pushing on it as if it were a solid thing. She stepped into the roiling waves, steadying herself as if she were standing on a mountain peak. She hovered there, unwilling to let gravity influence her. She raised her arms high above her shoulders, the glow from her skin brightening the sky. She shouted so loud it shook the heavens: "Oriul, you are free! And you..." She stepped over another wave and focused all her light on the Queen, a brilliant beam. "Demon Queen, it is time you felt the righteous light!"

An Oracle's Reading

The breeze was just strong enough to stir the feathers hanging from the oracle's wind catcher. If it was day, one couldn't tell. The ancient mangroves formed a dense canopy, blotting out the sky in a hundred layers of broad dark leaf. So too, their roots plunged into this cold marsh, creating a woven lattice that overran the forest floor.

The feathers danced gently, and urged a large spider into hurried movement nearby. Normally the bog was alive with sound, but not now, not while she was working. Now, rather, it was the clatter of bone upon bone and her slow erratic wheeze. She lifted the turtle shell and dumped its contents into the murky water. The lizardman was thin and ancient, yet her movements bespoke a subtle agility, a kind of youth unexpected in such a form. Her eyes were white and pearlescent, and it was evident that she was blind. Yet she moved as if she was not, plucking a squat frog from the water with ease.

With neither guilt nor wickedness, she tore the legs from it and placed them into the turtle-shell bowl. She worked for several moments, adding strands of moss, and fish bone. She worked in relative silence and stopped only to perceive a nearby elemental, slowly moving through the marsh.

She waited, almost reverently, observing it in her own way as it passed. When it had she looked back down into the bowl and slid a long nailed finger into the contents. By now the light had been stolen away from the marsh completely, the darkness settling in as if it were thick blanket be cast over the land.

And in the darkness she whispered in a voice strangely familiar: "It has been foretold ... they have need of me."

A Hunter's Quarry

One woodsman bent close to the ground, examining faint prints in the earth, while the other stood guard, bow raised, watching right and left. Unusual early light made its way into the otherwise dark forest, peeking through the trees.

Just beyond their position, a line of trees formed an impenetrable wall of green and dark gray. The kneeling man signaled that their quarry was ahead in the brush, but the other ignored him; already taking aim.

In an instant the thicket shuttered, and his arrow was quickly loosed. A metallic clang resounded as it was deflected away from its target. Then a great centaur emerged from the trees, a look of stern disappointment etched across his features.

The great half-man's horse body was huge, looking stronger than a destrier. He raised his bow—itself as tall as a man—with two menacing arrows nocked. He crossed the distance between them in precise movements, leaving the ground mostly undisturbed by his passage. "You think yourselves hunters, but you are not. You fools! You are close to Klik's domain. Do you know what that means? The goblins are on the move. They're setting fires. Do you see that glow? It's not the rising sun. They are lighting up bushes, trees, behind you. You will soon have only burning ground to read, and your escape will be cut off. They will be here soon. Go."

He paused shortly, carefully measuring his tone, controlling his frustration: "And next time woodsman: you ought to know your quarry before you take shot. Know your target first. Then and only then will it not escape."

A Halfling's Warning

The imposing oak doors leading into the temple swung hard on their hinges, upsetting the tranquil setting that this place was so well known for. They opened with such force that dust swirled and pooled at their base. It was an astonishing thing then, to see such a diminutive figure cross the threshold.

"Korenthis, the Dead King has entered the city. The time has come."

The wild creature spoke with a rough accent. She breathed a command and planted a walking staff into the ground. Behind her, a gigantic bear shifted into a lazy position waiting patiently for her to finish.

The troll, Korenthis, turned his attention away from the temple's reflecting pool, and stood to face his former comrade. His tall thin frame had very likely seen many decades come and pass. He looked wise, a trait especially rare for his race.

He pursed his lips and studied the halfling. After a brief moment, he stepped closer and knelt by her side.

"For years I'd wondered about the King of the Dead. Wondered if he was still active. We were naïve to think he had perished so long ago. You and I were the only survivors that day, though I doubt you'd remember it. Your parents would be proud to see you now. Have you gathered the others? We'll need them all."

The Megapede

His boot crunched upon the dry sand. It was quiet here, but he knew his presence was not overlooked. He knelt down and felt the ground for a few moments. The slightest tremor sent a vibration through the earth, and he knew at once that he had found the right place. The ruins were nearby, and so was.. she.

For days he'd been following their trail. The foolhardy group had set out from the City of Silver looking for trouble. Enterprising travelers could normally make it out here- survive out on their own without too much issue; but this particular trouble they were after was the Megapede: a terrible creature that plagued the badlands for many miles around.

He stood, gathered his belongings, and loaded his crossbow, pointing its magic sight into the distance. He spotted the ruins and knew they needed his help. They had no idea it was close. In a moment he was running, the hard earth cracking underfoot. He cared little about being discreet now, for he knew their adversary was about to strike. He had crossed half the distance when the monstrous beast lurched upward from below their camp.

A mountain of debris was upon them at once, swallowing their meager fire and all their supplies in the process. Then she emerged: a hundred feet long, a terror with a thousand legs. No, these adventurers clearly weren't ready for this.

"Let it begin!" he shouted.

Northland Steppes
Nogrim's Door
Knight's Watch
Crystal Canyon
Dragons Port
Siren's
Fernols Lake
Drogid's Mine
Hagh-Durgar
Durgar's Run
Wyvern's Rest
The Outlands
Faeriefire Marsh
Hagh-Durmish
The Midroad
Fain'hil City of Silver
Hagh-Ragol
The Runecrest
Accalon's Keep
Restwind Dale
Ruins of Hagh-Rhum
The Barrens
Greenfire Ridge
Autumn's Run
King's Road
The Traveler's Shrine
Giant's Crown Mountains
Kestrel's River
Kejel's Spire
Ethyr's Towers
Southcrown Cave
The Ruins of Naito

Bay
Crystalcrown
Oren's Hall
Cirnwell Lake
The Sacred Library
Highsummit
Rokk'to Encampment
Uktar's Gamble
Rin's River
Wilns Willow
The Gylm Mountains
Eastridge Road
Chak's Gultch
Hagh-Vrimol
Greater Khemul
Stormwrath Moothome
Agous Lake
The Giants Three
Hragad's Prison
Valley
Lesser Khemul
The Wailing Cavern
The Deadlands
The Shroud Stone
Freya's Fen
Tranquil Hills
Skycrown
Mount Aldebran
Shrine of the Noble
Hagh-Grindish The Iron Citadel
The Cryovolcano
Eagle's Reach
The Runecrest Mountains

Circumstance Tables

Use these optional tables to draw a specific Circumstance based on your location on the map. When you face a Circumstance, roll a ten-sided die based on the terrain type. If you roll the same Circumstance a second time, adjust your second roll result by 1 and choose the new Circumstance. You may choose to still place 5 open Circumstances in play while using this style.

Any Forest hex

HEX	Roll on the Epic Table
2	Hunter's Bounty
3	Pleasant Weather
4	Fisherman's Luck
5	Strangle Vines
6	Silk Spiders
7	Treants
8	Giant Boar
9	Grizzly
10	Bandits (Event)

Any Highland or Escarpment hex

HEX	Roll on the Epic Table
2	Cave System
3	Hidden Chest
4	Shady Informant
5	Unrelenting Thunderstorm
6	Storm Wolves
7	Thugs
8	Annoying Commoner
9	Thieves
10	Flash Flood

Any Marsh or Water hex

HEX	Roll on the Epic Table
2	Inclement Weather
3	Hag
4	Befuddled
5	Cursed
6	Living Storm
7	Lesser Water Elemental
8	Poisoned
9	Bandits (Encounter)
10	Will o'Wisps

Any Tundra or Arctic hex

HEX	Roll on the Epic Table
2	Frozen Portal
3	Friendly Merchant
4	Helpful Commoner
5	Kobolds
6	Raiders
7	Cyclops
8	Cave Trolls
9	Young Dragon
10	Giant Eagle

Any Plagueland hex

HEX	Roll on the Epic Table
2	Spoilage
3	Distracted
4	Brigands
5	Trogs
6	Dwarven Emissary
7	Maimed
8	Wyvern
9	Plague Beast
10	Mold

Any hex within 2 hexes of a Ruin

HEX	Roll on the Epic Table
2	Ancient Fortress
3	Treasure Chamber
4	Mangy Wolves
5	Raiders
6	Phase Beast
7	Diseased
8	Injured
9	Bone Legion
10	Apparition

Any hex adjacent to a Fallen City

HEX	Roll on the Epic Table
2	Hidden Chest
3	Sickened
4	Brainwashed
5	Marauders
6	Annoying Commoner
7	Ghoul
8	Fallen Townsfolk
9	Shambling Zombies
10	Bone Legion

Epic Table

HEX	Choose 1 from any table.
2	Xyzane's Onyx Hourglass
3	Trailblazing Boots
4	Aremi's Ring
5	Lucky Rabbits Foot
6	Dungeoneer's Manual
7	Accalon's Astrolabe
8	The Palanquin Man
9	Enchanted Hourglass
10	Treasure Chamber

Bosses

1 The Bandit Prince

Type: Humanoid
Lair: The Midroad

The Bandit Prince may have been born a nobleman's son, but all sense of honor has long been stripped from him. Even trusted friends and advisors have suffered his dishonesty.

He and his raiders have laid ruin to merchants and their caravans along the Mid Road for many years. Some whisper, however, that he is slipping into madness. His attacks have become more frequent and brutal.

Best to bring him to justice, if you can.

Facing

"Welcome to my kingdom!" The Bandit Prince laughs. "Many have come and tried to take my wealth, but I can promise you that none have succeeded." He unsheathes his rapier and points it forward. "I advise you to leave your tribute, take your lives, and go." As he speaks, the Prince's henchmen appear from the shadows, brandishing weapons and spouting insults. This villain has ransacked the nearby towns and merchants more than enough. You are here for a reason, and running away is not an option. You draw your weapon and stand tall, preparing for a fight. "Very well, I accept your lives as payment." With that the Bandit Prince and his men rush forward.

Defeating

The Bandit Prince falters, taking the final blow and falling to his knees. Those who served him are now scattered or dead, his kingdom in ruins. "Perhaps... I underestimated you." He looks at you in disbelief but then he smirks. "You may have bested me... but others like me... will rise and prev-" With that The Bandit Prince collapses to the ground, his threat eradicated from The Valley. Behind him sits a sealed chest. Upon opening it, you see wealth and items that may aid you in your quest. Challenging the enemies of The Valley may be worth the risk.

2 The Gray Slime

Type: Magical Nature
Lair: Southcrown Cave

Not much is known about this strange entity. It first welled up from the depths of the Southcrown Cave several years ago.

Many have tried to fell the monster, but none have returned. Tales are told of mounds of bone near its lair.

It is able to alter its shape and color to mimic its environment. One can never be sure they're alone when near it.

Be wary, traveler.

Facing

You know what you are looking for, and to be honest, it has been frustrating. The stories of the Gray Slime are either false or extremely accurate. Either way, this thing is nearly impossible to find, that is until you come across a large pile of bleached and cracked bones. You look at each other and silently decide that maybe it is time to leave this cave. The light produced from the entrance is still visible, and escape from this horrific place is within sight. Unfortunately, as you turn to leave, the ceiling begins to move and a terrible smell of sulfur fills your nose. Suddenly, a gelatinous creature drops from the roof of the cave, blocking the exit, a body still digesting inside of it. With surprising speed, it lurches at you, eroding the rock beneath it with an acidic burn.

Defeating

The poison in the air begins to thin as the slime melts into the ground. Your weapons are scarred by acid and your armor, marked. With each breath, your lungs burn from the fumes, yet somehow you are alive. The fight seemed as though it would be impossible, yet with thanks you stand triumphant. As the creature dissipates, you find a small amount of gold still clinging to the bones of the monster's previous victims. It may not be much, but you feel lucky to be alive, and that is reward enough. Now, to finally get out of this cave.

3 Overlord Chikak-ishak

Type: Monstrous Humanoid
Lair: Chak's Gultch

Overlord Chikak-ishak is a vile lizard-like creature.

It is whispered that the overgrown specimen bartered a deal with a demon long ago, granting it unearthly strength and an unnaturally long life.

He is said to rule with malice that is unmatched in the valley, and long have the people had to deal with his murderous nature.

Facing

A damp smell of mold fills your nose as you cross the entrance to Chikak-ishak's lair. Deep gouges hewn into the rock by a creature of immeasurable strength are scattered about the walls and ground. Your hand finds its way around the grip of your weapon, and not too soon. A large lizard-man lunges from the darkness and attempts to impale you with his scaled armor, your weapon taking the brunt at just the right time. Chikak-ishak stands before you, his wretched spiked tail scraping the ground. He lets out a primal cry and a host of Troglodytes gather behind him. Together, they look at you menacingly, and rush forward.

Defeating

A mighty roar escapes from Chikak-ishak's throat as he lunges for the last time. With skill, you dodge and inflict the final wound, dropping the creature to the floor. Any troglodytes who remain scatter at once at the sight of their fallen leader. You take a deep breath and look upon the hideous creature, grateful that the battle has finally reached its end and that you are alive. A fallen torch still burns to your left and you pick it up. It is time to leave this hideous place. While leaving, you pray to never see a creature like that ever again.

4 Goblin Emperor Klik

Type: Undead
Lair: The Wailing Cavern

Nobody is sure why the Dead King recruited Klik into the ranks of the undead, but his treachery and murderous nature are widely feared across the valley.

His goblins set fires in the south, and they'll take any spooked travelers who run their way.

Be warned, do not enter the deeps of the Wailing Cavern, for none who enter ever return.

Facing

"FOOLS! The Wailing Cavern is home to my brothers and I. You do not believe that you will succeed here, do you?" How did you walk into this trap? Goblins are not supposed to be smart, but then again, you have never dealt with Klik. If half the stories you have heard of his kidnapping and murderous ways are true, then this will prove to be a challenge. "The Dead King recruited me to unleash chaos upon this land, and you will not stand in my way!" Klik raises a shoddily crafted blade above himself, and a fireball springs to life in his other hand, "To me! Do not let them lay a finger on your leader!" A horde of goblins surrounds him, hissing. The sword points toward you and Klik smiles before crying out, "Attack!"

Defeating

While breaking free from the goblin hordes, you are able to rush upon Emperor Klik and deliver the killing blow. He screams in pain and curses you as he falls to the ground. The leader is dead, but his minions still remain. You turn around, preparing to finish the fight and witness them running, scattering away. He has been defeated, a lieutenant of the Bone Legion. This is a great victory indeed. The Dead King will not be pleased. A sense of hope surges inside you, perhaps true victory is possible. You claim the Goblin Emperor's wealth for your own and emerge from the Wailing Cavern, victorious!

5 The Megapede

Type: Creature

Lair: The Barrens

The Megapede is a truly fearsome monstrosity. Any who are squeamish should give a wide berth to this place.

Natives in the region regularly mistake rumblings in the ground for earthquakes.

In reality, it is the terrible Megapede, burrowing underfoot. She lies in wait, sensing the vibrations of adventurers' footfalls above her.

For those of you foolhardy enough to hunt this beast, worry not: it will hunt you.

Facing

"She'll let you think you're doing the huntin, but truth be told, she's been watching you the whole time. Be careful where you step or that monster will eat you right quick!" That was the only advice the locals had given when you chose to set out and best the Megapede. Piles of earth can be seen strewn about and occasionally the ground rumbles. Soon you realize that one of the nearby mounds is shaking and falling apart. In true warrior fashion, you sprint forward, preparing for the beast's head to emerge, when a large stinger erupts out from the ground. You attempt to dodge, yet as you sidestep the sand gives way, and the head of the Megapede appears beneath you. The locals were right, out here, you are the prey.

Defeating

The Megapede wriggles and writhes about for a short time and then becomes still, its life ended. As the sand settles to the round, you take a step back in disbelief, marveling at the feat you have just accomplished. The ground is marked with deep potholes, places where this vile beast had tried to swallow you whole. Feeling brave, you walk forward and kick its stinger, making sure that the creature no longer draws breath. It lies still, and you feel an aura of calm wash over you. Thankfully, a great enemy of the valley is no more.

6 Syv the Siren Queen

Type: Monstrous Humanoid
Lair: Siren's Bay

A terrible beauty hides beneath the sea, calling to those who dare cross it. Even the sea's plentiful (and hungry) denizens do their best to avoid this place. She calls to those who might cross the sea.

Her notes can be heard carried by the wind on a still, moonlit night. But should you ever hear her call, don't be fooled: The Siren yearns for the taste of flesh and bone.

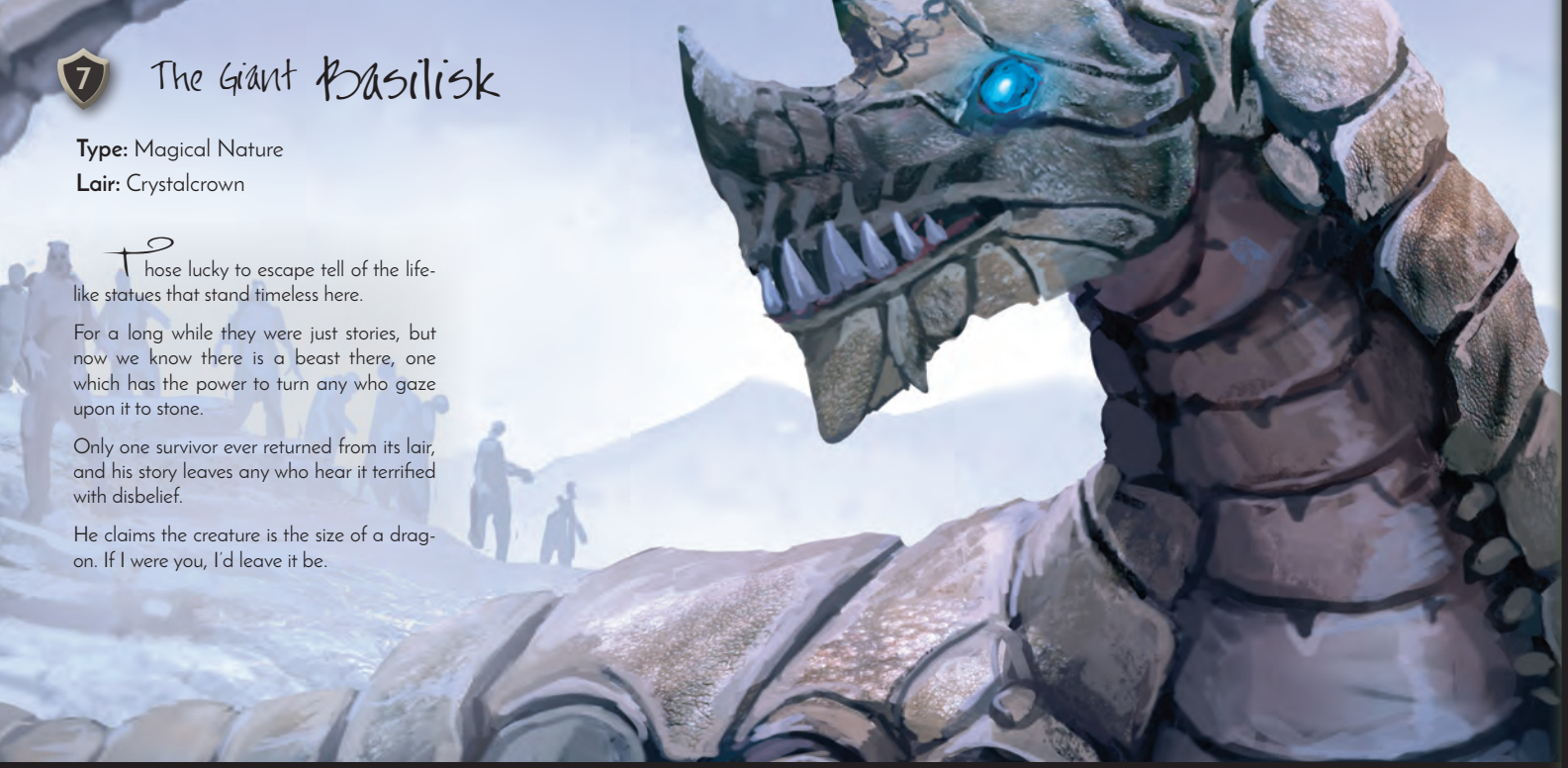
Only the stout of heart can resist her whispered temptations.

Facing

An eerie mist hangs in the air and rests upon the lapping waves. It is cold and damp, soaking your clothes and chilling you to the bone. While you row, a voice begins to sing. It is impossible to tell where the song is coming from, yet part of you does not care. It is sweet, intoxicating, and alluring. You cannot resist the temptation to gaze into the water, into the black abyss below, when a most terrifying creature lunges from the water and tries to grab you. Syv's horrid features pull you free from the song and you fall on your back. With a splash, the siren disappears beneath the waves once more and the song begins anew.

Defeating

Syv shrieks in agony as her lifeless body slams into the side of your boat and then disappears beneath the waves. Her song fades from your ears and suddenly you realize just how confusing this battle was. Memories of attacking her while simultaneously defending her flood your mind. It is strange, and you shake your head, trying to make sense of it. After a few moments, you give up and decide to leave this accursed place. There is no point to linger.



7 The Giant Basilisk

Type: Magical Nature
Lair: Crystalcrown

Those lucky to escape tell of the life-like statues that stand timeless here.

For a long while they were just stories, but now we know there is a beast there, one which has the power to turn any who gaze upon it to stone.

Only one survivor ever returned from its lair, and his story leaves any who hear it terrified with disbelief.

He claims the creature is the size of a dragon. If I were you, I'd leave it be.

Facing

Lonely statues fill the landscape, each stone structure seemingly masterfully crafted, every detail expertly formed. You can't help but gaze upon them in awe and wonder, yet something seems strange. As you look more closely, every face is filled with horror, as if something terrible was about to befall them. That is when you realize the truth. None of these were crafted, no, they are people turned to cold stone. No sooner does the realization take hold, when an immense rock suddenly stands and shows its monstrous head. The beast screams out in rage, its eyes glowing with an unearthly power, and charges forward, smashing every statue in its path.

Defeating

The light in the basilisk's eyes fade as the creature rolls to the ground, lifeless. While gasping for air, you watch in amazement as the creature's blood seeps onto a nearby statue. It shakes, and stone falls from it. Stone falls from the structure like a shedding skin, revealing a live, confused person. Excitement takes hold and you collect what you can of the red liquid. You pour it on statue after statue. It takes time, but soon many of those who had fallen to the basilisk's gaze are freed. They greet you with thanks and offer what aid they can.

8 The Cryovern

Type: Spirit
Lair: The Cryovolcano

The Cryovern is a spirit bound to the area surrounding the cryovolcano.

Legend has it that a wyvern of immense size was slain here long ago, creating the strange mountain that spews ice.

Its spirit still lingers; a phantasm of immense proportions. The Cryovern seeks to destroy any who enter the mountain.

The Onyxhelm brothers claim that the Cryovern guards a rich dwarven treasure. But how can anyone, even they, know?

Facing

Within a few hours of climbing the mountain slopes, a loud roar can be heard. You look up in time to see a frozen spirit of immeasurable size fly overhead and turn towards you. A cloud of hail spews forth from its mouth, assaulting you with shards of razor sharp ice. Then comes the cold, a deep, shivering, and painful cold. The creature lands before you and without hesitation you attack it, only to see your weapons pass through its ghostly form. While spreading its wings, the spirit roars once more and flies back to the sky, leaving a frigid trail of ice in its wake.

Defeating

Flying atop frigid winds, the cryovern starts to move about chaotically. Its wings flap wildly and then abruptly stop, as the spirit turns to solid ice. You swiftly dodge out of the way as the frozen figure falls from the sky and shatters against the ground. The wind swirls about the remains, gathering the shards and shaping them. You think the wind wishes to create a memorial in the shape of the Cryovern. But there's more: it comes to life, paying you no heed, taking flight, higher and higher, far away into the sky, free from its angered, tormented existence. You have seen it, the spirit of wing and ice, and now desire nothing more than to leave this cold, barren place.

9 The Frost Giant Jarl

Type: Monstrous Humanoid
Lair: Giant's Crown Mountains

All know to avoid the southern mountains, for the Frost Giants are as brutal as the peaks are cold.

Though they never stray far from their snow-topped towers, they are an ever-present danger to travelers.

It is said that the Giants are led by a particularly aggressive individual, G'thard the Vicious. This Frost Giant Jarl takes no prisoners, valuing their blood and bones instead for a rare warm meal.

Facing

A frost giant of great strength and height, Jarl of the southern mountains, and lord of their snow covered peaks stands before you. He licks his frosty lips and stares at you with a longing gaze. "I hunger, and you have chosen to wander into my realm, ripe for the slaughter." G'thard clutches his axe with both hands, preparing to turn you into mincemeat. "It has been too long since I last tasted blood and bone!" The earth shakes with each step as he rushes forward, intent on having his meal.

Defeating

The ground rumbles and the trees shake as G'thard falls to the ground. The frozen axe lays at his side, no longer gripped by his hungry fingers. For a moment you wait, unsure of his demise, afraid that the giant will stand once more, yet he lies utterly still. Chilled to the bone, you start a small fire and attempt to warm yourself. Some hours later and shaking off the cold, you snuff your fire, scatter its ashes, and begin the long trek from this frozen waste, certain that you will never willingly return there.

4 The Gray Wolf Pack

Type: Creature

Lair: The Runecrest Valley

Sleeping by day and roaming the wilds at night, the gray wolf pack is known for its natural skill at hunting. They are fearless when they're hungry, relying on the entire pack to bring down their quarry.

When they pick up a scent, seldom do they quit hunting till their prey has been cornered. Take care! You do not want to be their prey.

Facing

The day's travels have been difficult, leading in directions you did not intend to go. So as you look to the horizon, dark clouds filled with rain and lightning douse your spirits. Then, as thunder begins to rumble, a howl breaks through the waning light and is quickly answered. Before you can react, a pack of wolves surrounds you. Their fangs are sharp, and spit drips from the tips of their hungry tongues. Eyeing them and drawing your weapons, you prepare for the worst.

Defeating

With a flash of blades and the crackle of magic, the leader of the pack falls to the ground. The remaining wolves put up a fight but eventually run off, scattered and confused without their alpha. While gathering your thoughts, you hear a whimper, a sound more like a dog than a wolf. There, at your feet, sits a pup. Your first thought is to strike the creature down, yet there is something in its eyes, something that doesn't seem violent. You cautiously reach out and extend a welcoming hand to it.

5 The Storm Elemental

Type: Spirit
Lair: The Runecrest Valley

The stories of a strange ethereal being, that can control the might of a raging storm, have become quite common since the return of the Dead King.

Those who claim to have seen it have no idea how to bring its demise, and prefer to stay home with a comforting roof over their heads.

Facing

For the last few days a large billowing cloud has remained on the horizon, always growing and approaching. You try to keep this strangeness out of your mind, yet the oddity of the situation pricks at your thoughts. Suddenly, the sky grows dark, as if day has turned to night, and a great arcing blast of lightning strikes the ground near you. The wind kicks up in wild gusts, and you turn to see the cloud transform into a hulking creature. The fiend opens its mouth and screams like thunder as lightning flashes from its hands. The air around you begins to crackle with static. You are the elemental's target.

Defeating

The elemental billows bigger and brighter, an electrostatic cloud. The wind stops, and all becomes still for a moment, then with a cacophony of thunderous sound, the storm erupts into a brilliant display of lightning. Brilliant arcs reach out across the sky and disappear on the horizon. You shield your eyes, yet when you look again, the spirit has dissipated, leaving the sky a calm gray. Trembling, amazed that you survived the fight, you notice a crystal of some kind smoldering in the ground. Curiosity overtakes you, and you cautiously approach it, desiring to assess its power.

6 Ethyr of the Wild

Type: Magical Nature
Lair: Ethyr's Towers

The spawn of two great ancient beings from another land, Ethyr has wandered the wilds of the valley in search of familiarity. Confused and angry, this poor creature lashes out, attacking anyone and anything in its path that may wander under the boughs of the giant tree, his home and place of safety.

Facing

While unpacking for the night and preparing to make camp, a sudden stillness befalls the giant tree sheltering you. The remnants of the suns light can be seen shining between two nearby trees, and from its brilliance a large creature with glowing claws and eyes appears. The beast is huge, resembling the body of a bear with the head on an owl. Confused and slightly afraid, you turn and face the creature. The abomination looks on you and lets out a terrifying shriek as it opens its claws and begins to rush forward. While preparing to defend yourself, you can't help but wonder what kind of monster this is.

Defeating

Ethyr shrieks his last and falls to the ground lifeless, the glow in its claws and eyes fading until no shred of light remains. Carefully, you approach the creature, wanting to make sure of its demise. After being certain, you return to camp and try to relax. Still, why did such a beast attack you? That is when you see it, the claw marks on the giant trees trunk, the warn patch of ground on which you sit. Could it have been that his monster was only protecting its home?

7 Alabast the Fallen One

Type: Undead
Lair: Hagh-Grindish, The Iron Citadel

Durdin Onyxhelm's beloved animal companion was once known as Alabast. The renowned trainer rescued the cub nearly 25 years ago and raised him to be one of the most revered and loved figured in the dwarven society.

It is said that the two were often spotted moving through the streets of Hagh-Grindish, the lovable bear often pausing to allow children to touch his soft fur coat.

Sadly, his days have ended, having been claimed by the King. Who can help put him out of his misery?

Facing

The slopes of Fiekins Peak are frigid and unforgiving. Biting winds tear through your clothes and slash at your skin, leaving you to cover your eyes in the blizzard conditions. As the gale howls, a second sound can be heard, the deep guttural roar of a mighty beast. You attempt to peer through the blinding white of the blowing snow and see the hulking shape of a pale bear before you. Surprised, you watch as the creature charges forward, its eyes unnaturally green and hollow. Horror grips you as the true form of this decaying monster appears. The bear rears up on its hind legs and bellows into the sky, then lunges forward and begins its attack.

Defeating

The hulking form of Alabast crumbles and falls beneath the blowing snow. Unsure of the beasts demise, you cautiously move forward and gaze upon its rapidly decaying remains. The wind continues to howl and bites at your skin. With haste, you take a small trophy, intent on delivering it and the news of the bears death to the dwarven leaders. Not wishing to remain on the slopes another moment, you gather your things and set off, back down the mountain.

THE DEAD KING

Fallen City Triggers

Read these entries aloud after each of the six Cities fall.

The Dead King Arrives

His expression spoke volumes. The passerby spoke hurriedly, uttering the last words you ever hoped to hear, "He has returned! The Dead King has returned and the Bone Legion is coming! He took the city for himself. Leave quickly!" With that the traveler leaves you, almost tripping over his own feet in haste. Somewhere beyond, a warning bell begins to toll from a distant watchtower. So the rumors are true, the valley is about to become a much more dangerous place.

The 2nd City Falls

Word has reached you that another one of the great cities has fallen to the might of the Dead King. It has been some time since he first appeared, and that fact brings with it a slight hope that perhaps he isn't as powerful as legends have told. Still, the threat seemingly grows and with it come the armies of the dead. It is a simple equation then, as the necromancer grows in power, so must you.

The 3rd City Falls

Yet another city has fallen. This one happened more quickly, and now refugees flee the cities daily. Abandoned wagons are a common sight on dangerous roads, and even merchants are taking risks they would normally avoid. Tales of the dead wandering into villages across the valley are now so frequent, that people are attempting to flee the cities in mass. This new truth sends shivers up your spine. Even the ground itself seems to have withered and died in places, reacting to the terrifying magic of the Dead King. You fear time is beginning to run out.

The 4th City Falls

A caravan of travelers hurriedly pass you on the road. One man, a burly looking hunter halts to speak with you, bearing ill tidings. It would seem the Dead King's legion continues to grow, with a fourth city now in ruin. With their ever increasing numbers, it is evident that his army is like a wave washing across the land, enveloping every village and town in reach. "We can no longer stay in this place. There is no point in trying to survive in this graveyard. You aught to keep going, leave the valley, we're headed for the East." he says confidently. Even the leaves are turning in color and the smell of rot and decay catches your senses. The valley is certainly changing, it is becoming a home for the dead and their hideous leader.

The 5th City Falls

It has been nearly a week without the sun. Overcast skies have led to powerful storms. The earth itself seems to have given up. The dry arid dirt has begun to change, with crops having withered, ruining all chance that this winter will be well managed by the locals. The news that five of the great cities have now fallen does little to surprise you. It has been only days since you heard of the last city's fate. With each person killed, each town, each soul turned, the Dead King has grown in strength and speed. Only one of the great cities remains and you fear that no matter what you do, the time to stop him may have passed. Hordes of the dead now roam the land, killing anything that yet draws living breath. The land and its people are dying before you and the legion is still moving. Move swiftly now!

The Last City Falls

The walls of the last free city have been breached and the hordes of the Bone Legion have now grown to their full might. Now the fallen seem to be the last remaining citizens of this once great valley, killing at will and ever adding to the King's garish army. He has nearly gained complete dominance, and now seeks the remnants of those who might oppose him. Night has fallen upon the land and unless you are able to put an end to this vile plot, light may never return. Hope has been lost!

If Bezzelquark's Black Market is on the board after the last City falls, turn to page 12 and read the last entry on the page.

Facing the Dead King

Read these entries aloud when your group faces the Dead King in the final combat, or when he successfully raises a hero using Entropic Wave (Boss 1 action).

Challenging the Dead King

With confidence, you approach the necromancer, knowing that your quest is about to end in glorious victory or terrifying, unholy resurrection. The Dead King stands before you, emanating a vile and strange power. A sharp crown rests upon his brow, and a staff is clutched in his hand. He smiles and tilts his head, "I have heard of you. Whispers of your exploits traverse the valley nearly as quickly as you do." He bows and gazes forward with a covetous eye, "I must admit that I am honored to meet you, and humbled to know that soon you will join my legion." He laughs and raises the staff, the dark power growing. "Do what you must, but know that this is where your story ends and begins anew!" No sooner do the necromancer's words leave his mouth, and he rushes forward, the power of death at his back.

Challenging the Dead King in a City

The city walls are filled with the living dead, their faces devoid of expression. Lifeless eyes follow your every move as you walk past the gates and make your way deeper within. They follow you, dropping in line, preventing escape, but not attacking. It seems that the necromancer is allowing you to approach. After a few moments, you come face to face with your enemy. The Dead King laughs maniacally, and points his staff at you, "You are foolish! The valley will fall to my will, and so will you. Living or dead, it makes no difference. All shall obey me!" He raises a hand to the sky and suddenly his legion draws their weapons in unison. Clutching the talisman, you respond in kind and prepare to fight. "Very well," the Dead King shouts, "then you will serve me in death!"

The Dead King Raises a Hero

You watch in horror as your friend falls to the wrath of the King. Racing forward, you plunge your weapon in the necromancer's direction. You will make sure he dies, as surely as you draw breath. Suddenly, you see a flash in his eye and a groan rings out from behind you. You delay your assault momentarily, only to find your friend stand up, their eyes glowing the same vile green color, a lifeless expression on their face. You wish it wasn't true, does the King's cruelty know no bounds? The Dead King laughs with hatred in his heart. As you look upon your turned ally, he speaks with a booming voice, "Did I not say that this was your fate? Surrender now, or I will continue to take you, one by one."

End Game

Defeated!

Read one of these entries aloud if the group Starves to Death, the Game defeats the heroes, or the Dead King defeats you.

The heroes starved to death

Overconfidence can be a killer. It is a truth that you have had to learn the hard way. When traveling the valley, especially one being ravaged by the Bone Legion, food is something that should always be well stocked. For reasons, you seem to have put too much faith in your abilities to survive in nature and now pay the price for not being able to forage. You find yourself wishing that you had listened to the folks in town, that you would have paid for that extra set of rations. Hunger has taken you, not battle, not a glorious stand against the Dead King, no, hunger. The necromancer will take control of these lands for you have starved to death.

The Game defeats the Heroes

Not all Heroes are cut from the same cloth, and while you have fought valiantly, your time has come. Perhaps it is not you who is destined to save the valley, but know that others will continue to try. Even though the enemy that felled you still lives, die with the knowledge that another will come along and challenge this foe again. Rest well, heroes, your journey has ended.

The Dead King defeats the heroes

After weeks of conflict, you finally fall to one knee, bloodied and battered. Your friends have fallen, only to be raised again and forced to continue fighting from the grave, this time as your enemy. The Dead King steps forward and takes your throat in his hand, lifting you into the air. The last thing you see is a sinister grin as he snuffs out your life. You have perished, and now you stand in the Bone Legion. The valley will burn and will now serve a new master: the vile one, he who has risen, the Dead King!

Victorious!

Read this aloud when you defeat the Dead King.

Necromantic power arcs like lightning all around you, cutting through the air and threatening to bring you to your knees. The Dead King is intent on crushing your will. He walks forward, raises his hands, and attempts to drain you of what little life you have left.

His maniacal expression oozes both hatred and scorn as he exclaims, "Give in! Soon you will belong to me!" The hope of the valley and all who have fought to live within ride upon your shoulders, there is no giving in. You wipe sweat from your brow and stand a little taller, preparing for another attack. The Dead King glares at you as you defy him again, then raises his staff in an arc that traces the battlefield. Confident in his victory, more of the bone legion answers, when suddenly you sprint forward, taking him by surprise.

With satisfaction, you note the look of dismay and horror that crosses the necromancer's face as you deliver the final blow. He screams defiantly, and a blinding putrid yellow light erupts across the battlefield, momentarily blinding you. As your vision returns, you see him on his knees, green blood spilling from his mouth.

He stares at you in anger and disbelief, words seeming to finally escape him. He grips his staff and holds himself steady while continuing to stare. A shaky hand points in your direction and he coughs, "You... how...?" You do not give him the satisfaction of an answer and once more rush forward to finish your quest.

With the final blow dealt, the Dead King falls, his body limp and inanimate. The wind suddenly gathers below him, lowering the necromancer to the ground, yet when his body touches the dirt, whips of green power rise out from around him. You watch as his body quickly decays and turns to dust.

After a few moments it is over, his pointed crown the only remnant left. The enchantment he spread over the land dissipates, and the shadowy veil lifts from the world around you. For the first time since you set out on this journey, you notice the warmth of the sun on your skin and the smell of fresh air. The valley rejoices, finally freed from the power of the Dead King. Sadness creeps over you when you realize that the people he commanded would never be the same. It is then that the staff withers and turns to ash. A great burst of force issues out as it disintegrates. As the burst continues forth, you see it pass over the fallen. They begin to breathe! Perhaps you have saved the valley after all..

With a smile, you look at each other and begin to help those who are rising. Only this time, they're free.

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